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Cold and showery for Easter

18 March 2008

As the Easter weekend approaches, forecasters at the Met Office are predicting the weather will turn much colder later this week, with sleet or snow for some but with sunshine also on offer.

For those heading out and about, southern and western areas of the UK should see the best of any dry, sunny and breezy weather. However, strong winds and a wintry mix of showers are expected to make conditions feel even colder across northern and eastern areas of the country.

The Met Office is working closely with transport providers by delivering regular forecast information, helping them assess the possible impact of the weather for travellers.

Despite the prospect of some varied weather over the Easter break, Tom Wright, Chief Executive at VisitBritain said: "there are plenty of opportunities to make the most of the long Bank Holiday weekend, despite the weather forecast, with indoor and outdoor attractions all over the country open for business".

The predicted change to colder weather comes as the Met Office unveils its new Advisory as part of the improvements to the National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS).

There are a number of changes being made to the current warning system, including the introduction of a new tier of alert, the Advisory, which will supplement the current Early and Flash warnings.

The two tiers of weather event will be introduced based on the potential impact of the event – *severe* and *extreme* and follow a new criteria 'traffic light' system based on impact risk.

As a quick guide to the colours, they should be interpreted as:

'**Be aware**' means: Remain alert and ensure you access the latest weather forecast.

'**Be prepared**' means: Remain vigilant and ensure you access the latest weather forecast. Take precautions where possible.

'**Take action**' means: Remain extra vigilant and ensure you access the latest weather forecast. Follow orders and any advice given by authorities under all circumstances and be prepared for extraordinary measures.

Key to warning colours | FAQs about the improvements

Bruce Mann, Director of Civil Contingencies at the Cabinet Office says, "The Met Office has a frontline role; tracking developments days in advance and providing warnings to the appropriate authorities. Met Office advisory and forecast services are widely recognised as essential elements in resilience planning and emergency response."

Graeme Leitch, Met Office Public Weather Service spokesperson, says, "The improvements announced today have been planned for some time and respond directly to feedback from our partners from the emergency services and local authorities.

"The Advisory alert will flag up a developing situation to allow for more preparedness further in advance, and alerts generally will be more targeted and easier to use. The user-friendly traffic light system will provide quick and easy access to vital weather information to emergency responders and the public alike."

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Notes:

Over the last 45 years, snow has fallen during Easter across lowland UK on 12 occasions. The last time that snow fell widely across lowland UK was Easter 1998.

The dates of Easter vary in accordance with the date of the spring equinox and lunar calendar. Easter day follows the first full moon, which in turn follows the spring equinox. This year, the equinox is 20 March, the next full moon is 21 March, hence Easter Day on 23 March.

More Easter information

For further information:

Met Office Press Office +44 (0)1392 886655
E-mail: pressoffice@metoffice.gov.uk